

WootenNews

Founder's Perspective:



Myrtle Faye Rumph

Dear Supporters:

We have anxiously awaited this opportunity to share with you some wonderful things taking place in the lives of our youth who started with us in 1990 when the Center first opened. We hope you will be encouraged with the progress our youth are making. It has been a long and hard struggle, but it's been worth every minute, looking back and seeing that none of them have been killed. That in itself is a miracle, especially in this community.

We count our blessings everyday that the Center is still here, with our youth being in a safe and caring learning environment. Some of them have developed into productive citizens in our society.

We are asking you to please help us keep our safe haven open.

Thank you in advance for your support. May God Bless you!

Faye

Where Are They Now!



Wooten Center youth pose with former Councilman Robert Farrell on their very first Wooten Center field trip in 1990. The Center was invited to observe a Los Angeles City Council meeting.

Shown in above photo (starting front row left to right)

Timothy Morris, then age 9, now age 21, student at Riverside Community College.

Matthew Sutton, then age 5, now age 17, student at El Camino College.

Carmalina Nelson, then age 6, now age 18, graduate of Crenshaw High School, planning to attend college.

Donna Nelson, then age 7, now age 20, employed locally.

Antoine Powell, then age 10, now age 20, currently owns barber shop.

Lamar Porter, then age 12, now age 25, employed as Asst. Director of Wooten Center Teen Center.

Brett Williams, then age 12, now age 24, student at Cal State Los Angeles.

Edward Nelson, then age 13, now age 25, employed and student at Cal State Los Angeles.

Calvin, invited guest

(Second row, left to right)

Naomi Bradley, former Wooten Center Executive Director.

Shannon Handley, then age 9, now age 21, employed as a cosmetologist.

Jason Wilborne, then age 11, now age 23, employed as telemarketer.

Devlan Boyd, then age 13, now age 25, received A.A. Degree in graphic design, working as a freelance artist.

Former Los Angeles Councilman Robert Farrell.

Marquita Herskowitz, then age 12, now age 25, employed locally.

Myrtle Faye Rumph, Wooten Center Founder / President.

Gloria Bradley, former Wooten Center Program Director.

Visit us on our website at:
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**Al Wooten Jr.
Heritage Center**

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Streets of Los Angeles

Story by: Alexis Clark



What's powerful way. Its affect made all of us think. It could be anyone at any given time.

going on in the streets of Los Angeles is no secret. Death now has an even bolder face, and has

been visiting numerous people lately. The violence has gotten so out of hand, the ones committing these acts don't even care about the repercussions. The streets of Los Angeles have made a drastic change, capturing the safety of walking to the corner store or the bus stop.

Towards the end of November, I was standing at the bus stop in Los Angeles on my way home from school. Unexpectedly I witnessed a fourteen year old boy get gunned down. It was mind blowing to me because, ten seconds before I heard him talking about needing a transfer and laughing with his friends. The next minute I saw him lying on the ground, with every inch of life drained from his body. As I watched the blood run from his body down the sidewalk, I realized that in a matter of seconds your life could be over. He was shot close to ten times, and although I didn't really know him the memory still sits deeply in my mind.

Very recently my friends and I lost someone very close to us to street violence. He was the cousin of my friends, but I knew him also, and we all saw him on a daily basis. I couldn't believe the news when I first heard it. But it really hit hard when I realized that a person I was used to seeing almost everyday, I would never see in the flesh again. A voice that I was used to, I would never again hear speak or laugh. This death touched us in a very

I sat down with one of the young men at the Center and asked him how he felt about what is going on in the streets of L.A. His response, "It didn't happen over night and it's not going to stop that way." I also asked the young man, age 17, what's one of the reasons that he comes to the Center. He replied, "It's like I'm seeking refuge from something that I'm a part of." He also stated that being at the Center helps to keep him occupied, since he can't change the situation. The Center affects us all in a positive way, and plays a major part in our community.

The Wooten Center is here to help slim our chances of meeting death, by keeping us off the streets. The Center is not only a substitute for the streets, but there are also educational activities that we all participate in. We recently completed a successful debate on our views of the War in Iraq. We are currently putting together our second debate on the different effects rap music has on society. We have sessions every Tuesday, in which we are given new vocabulary words to learn. On Thursday we have group math classes. Also, we are working on putting together a spelling bee.

Time will tell if the streets of Los Angeles will ever change. Only the Master knows what lies ahead in the years. All we can do is be as careful as possible, and still live our lives. We must remain alert at all times and make sure to not become statistics in this labyrinth of street violence. We thank the Wooten Center for their attempt to block our path leading to destruction and being there when the young need them most.

Wooten Center Opens New Teen & Young Adult Center

In March 2003, the Al Wooten Center opened its new Teen & Young Adult Center. This much-needed center will offer services to Wooten youth ages 14 and up. It is located in the corner building that formerly housed our Tutorial Center. The Tutorial Center is



Wooten Teen Center youth pose before squaring off in Wooten Teen Center's Annual Baseball Game.



Rick, Wooten Teen Center Director showing off his grilling skills.

mentoring, lots of preparation including research and preparedness, studying material on the current crisis in Iraq. Although the participants on the "Pro" team won, the entire debate team was treated to a delicious awards dinner.

During its first month of existence the Center

In the month of June the Teen Center will present its first Spelling Bee. The two teams are currently studying in preparation for the big day.

The Wooten Center is very proud of the Teen Center, and will make efforts to continue to provide our youth with the resources necessary to maintain growth and be-



Wooten Teens prepare to debate 'Iraq War' Issue.

now located in our main building.

The Teen Center offers tutoring, homework assistance, computer classes,

sponsored its first debate. The topic was The War in Iraq: Pro or Con. Six teens participated in the debate which required

You can realize tax advantages by donating stock to the Wooten Center. Contact Linda Miles (323) 756-7203 at the

Wooten Center teams with Chadwick High School

The Wooten Center Homework Assistance Program has been enhanced with volunteers from Chadwick High School's Community Service Program. Under the direction of Chadwick's Becky Noble, volunteers from Chadwick have been assisting Wooten youth on a weekly basis with homework and reading comprehension, and providing nutritious snacks for each child's efforts.

The goal of the Chadwick Community Service Program is to expose their students and community members to the educational needs of inner city youth. In addition, this program offers a rewarding experience in educational growth and personal development to both the volunteer and the child.



Chadwick High School youth tutor Wooten kids during 'Homework Assistance' session.

The Wooten Center's First Four Members



Lamar Porter started age 12, now age 25
Asst. Director Wooten Teen Center



Jason Wilborne started age 11, now age 23
Working in Telemarketing



Devlan Boyd started age 13, now age 25
Graphic Artist



Brett Williams started age 12, now age 24
Attending Cal State Los Angeles

A Tribute to Mr. Thomas C. McGeary

The Wooten Center was saddened this past December 2002 at the passing of one of its staunch supporters and donors, Mr. Thomas McGeary, founder and president of Mag-Tek, Inc. located in Carson, California. Mr. McGeary had been a supporter of the Center since 1996. He was introduced to us by our Gardening volunteer, Mr. Robert Vann. After his first visit to the Center, Mr. McGeary was immediately impressed by the work being done for the youth of South Central Los Angeles.

Mr. McGeary showed his support by providing funds for our tutorial program and general operations of the center, including our garden. He was the first major sponsor for our first golf classic, held in 1997, and has since been a major sponsor for each of our six tournaments. Employees of Mag-Tek, Inc. par-

ticipate annually in our golf classics, oftentimes placing first or second in the tournament.

"Mr. McGeary was a person that didn't mind driving to South Central Los Angeles to visit us," stated Mrs. Rumph. "On several occasions he would just stop by to visit and before leaving hand me a check. He was a very generous man, and we will miss him. Our condolences and prayers go to his family and the many friends that will also miss him."

In honor of Mr. McGeary, the Wooten Center recently named its garden, The Tho-

mas C. McGeary Garden. A large picture of Mr. McGeary and Mr. Robert Vann has been placed above the door leading outside to our garden.

We are ever so grateful to Mr. Thomas McGeary for all he has done for the Wooten Center.



Wooten Center President, Myrtle Faye Rumph, poses with Mr. McGeary after presenting him with the Wooten Center Vision Award.

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